

DELAWARE BAY BEACH WORK GROUP

January 13, 2012

SENATE HEARING ROOM, DOVER

10:00 – 1:00 PM

**AGENDA**

**Delaware Bay Beach Work Group Meeting**

**Senate Hearing Room, Legislative Hall, Dover**

**10:00 – 12:00 Noon**

**January 13, 2012**

10:00 – 10:15

Opening Remarks - Co-chairs (Senator Brian Bushweller & Senator Gary Simpson)

10:15 - 10:30

Status report on Flood Group and Beach Group - Activities since the last meeting (Frank Piorko, Tony Pratt)

10:30 – 11:15

Status report on beach economic study (Jim Eisenhardt)

11:15 – 11:45

Work Group discussion on presentations and future actions/expectations of the Work Group

11:45 – 12:00

Public comment

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Introductions – Committee Members

No opening remarks.

**Status Report on activities on the Drainage and Beach sub-committees to date from Frank Piorko and Tony Pratt:**

**Frank Piorko** - At this point with the drainage and minor flooding portion of the work group we have developed an assessment tool that will provide a very broad brush approach of looking at each of the bay beach communities. Realizing they are all different and have their own sets of unique problems but we tried to find some common ground for assessment. Many of you were at the last general meeting and/or the sub-work group meetings where we worked on the drainage assessment conditions and we now want to apply them throughout each of the bay beach communities. To further refine our look with the help of Andrea Kreiner some of you were involved in the process where we looked at a decision tree matrix where we put weighting factors to each of these things such as public safety impacts, economic impacts, agricultural

impacts, public health, societal and miscellaneous impacts of our efforts to improve minor flooding and drainage conditions. (Finalized Document of Work Group Handout “Division of Watershed Assessment Drainage Project Prioritization Ranking Sheet and Bay Beach Communities Drainage Assessment Scope of Services). The goal is to bring someone on in a professional capacity to use these tools to assess each of the bay beach communities. We have **estimated** a cost of \$185,000-200,000. In an effort to move forward we are going to look at the Scope of Services and put together a letter of interest that will go out for a qualified consultant to submit their interest in doing this project and their qualifications. That gives us the ability to select a consultant, individual or team to work on this project further refine our scope of services and work on a budget. We can do all these things without actually committing to a contract and even when we commit on a contract it is depending on funding. While we continue to look for funding we are not going to sit still on this effort. We are going to move the effort forward to try and find the right people to help us and in the meantime we will be looking for funding.

We are not doing an engineering study we are doing an assessment of community problems and an identification of what problems rise to a level of urgency over others. Not to pick one community over another but that is part of the idea of doing an assessment and matrix for prioritization. To see what problems there are in each community and how readily available solutions are.

There are some individual projects that are happening. We have a tax ditch petition in the Kitts Hummock community and we have work that we are doing in the Bowers community.

**Representative Peterman** - South Bowers – When it rains it can take up to 6-8 hours before it goes down before the people are able to either get out or get back into their homes. Where does this issue come in to the prioritization?

**Frank Piorko** – We have looked at that issue and it plays to the public safety issue on the ranking sheets.

**Representative Peterman** – What can we do to help you gather some of the information?

**Frank Piorko** - As we move along with the process we will sit down and decide what information we will need from the community.

**Tony Pratt** - Most work will be shown on the presentation that Jim Eisenhardt will present.

We are doing work at critically eroded areas right now. We are doing truck haul projects at Bower, South Bowers and Kitts Hummock in the next several weeks. We are working on survey work for Broadkill Beach anticipated work to be done later this winter. Because of Irene damages and sand losses we were able to get FEMA dollars. The dollar amount we will recover from FEMA will be **approximately** \$500,000. No specific dredging dates for the Prime Hook, Broadkill and Slaughter areas yet. Don’t know when we will be at Kitts Hummock but would guess within the month. We are doing beaches where we have had easements for the past 30 years.

## **Jim Eisenhardt - Economic Study Status Report: - Presentation on website – Task Force Presentation January 13, 2012**

The goal of the economic study is to determine the distribution of benefits for different management scenarios. It is not necessarily a dollars assessment. Distribution in a sense means for those parties involved who benefits, the local communities, the counties, the State, taxpayers and federal government in general and local business. Benefits can be described in dollars it can also be described in astatic value; natural resource value those can also be converted into dollars; also through economic models. But benefits are a very broad discussion. Management scenarios there are so many ways to look at options out here and we will discuss ways we are looking at certain scenarios. This will be an effort with the consulting team, technical people, DNREC and this work group to try and figure out where this is all going to end up.

### **ECONOMIC ANALYSES –**

- ☐ Categories of Economic Effects Projected to be Analyzed
- ☐ Structures/Assets Damages
- ☐ Tourism Revenues
- ☐ Recreation
- ☐ Property values
- ☐ Local/Statewide business revenues
- ☐ Population demographics – shifts
- ☐ **Natural Resource Capital Valuation Wetlands, Wildlife, Fisheries, Etc.**
- ☐ **Others**

Discussion regarding the Natural Resources Capital Valuation Wetlands, Wildlife, Fisheries, Etc. being taking out of the analyses.

**Jim Eisenhardt** - After many meetings the one in red will not be followed through for an analysis. We will not spend money to do a quantitative assessment. There will not be an appreciable change in the effort on wetlands, horseshoe habitat, or others to be a measure for these analyses.

**Senator Simpson** stated that he is just not sure if we are getting an accurate picture of the economic value of the Delaware coastline without looking at wetlands which is probably the most valuable resource that Delaware has.

**Senator Simpson** stated that he did not know that we were only studying beach replenishment for this Work Group. We talked about wetland evaluation and agricultural evaluation early on.

Why are we spending money to evaluate drainage if we are not going to assign an economic value to those drainage projects? How do you take that portion out of the study? We have not broadened our scope enough to look at the entire system when we just look at beach replenishment.

We have to keep in our mind that we have to come up with a long term financing plan to continue those beach replenishment for the next 25+ years. We all would like nothing better than to have a short term fix but we have been charged with coming up not only with short term but also we have to come up with long term plans.

**Tony Pratt** – The initial implementation of this work group was a follow up of the PBS&J study.

**Jim Eisenhardt** - We all agree that the resource is valuable. This study was focused on the benefits to be distributed of doing beach nourishment to protect 7 communities. It was not an analysis to project what the benefits would be to protect the whole coastline from flooding in a major drainage project. The study with the dollars and the intent could only focus right now on the 7 communities.

There are no direct impacts to the wetlands by the scenarios we pose. Everybody agreed that the wetlands, horseshoe crabs and the other 30-40 keynote species that are extremely important to the State for a variety of reasons including our economy but in the scope they have been looked at differently.

**Frank Piorko** – Jim was brought in to assist the Department to provide data to us from which decisions will be made as to how to continue to maintain the bay beach shorelines with what we know. What we know according to a plan is how much it is going to cost to maintain 12.1 miles out of the 30.2 miles of the continuous shoreline, that is the representation of the populated communities that the PBS&J defined and the cost to do that over 10 years. Our original charge was to look at those costs and to figure out how to make them sustainable and to offer what percentage of cost share might be looked at and the way we are going about it with our consultant is to look at all the benefits. Not just the benefits of those that own homes along the shoreline, but the benefits of agriculture and the environment and our natural resources. All those factors are absolutely being considered in the context of the 12.1 miles of shoreline protection that PBS&J calls for. Now in the context of adding the drainage dimension to this study which was a very good piece of this. We decide to look at these communities also from the standpoint of drainage and minor flooding. We know that all these communities are experiencing some element of drainage problems and minor flooding. What can we do to facilitate improvement in those communities? What is missing is the piece that we are hearing from people that are getting flooded in many of these communities and that flooding may or may not have anything to do with how much bay shoreline we protect. In some communities that is going to have a sufficient impact on how those communities drain. In other communities we could protect the bay shoreline for that entire 30 miles and those communities will still flood. So, in order for us to add value with this study with defining bay coastline which may have to be increased in the evaluation of this study. If we are going into each of these communities and talk with the people, we will find out which communities are going to tell us don't put your money or

your efforts in the dune protection or the shoreline protection outside of the populated community. That is not where our problems come from our problems come from the back side from flooded wetlands. So when we find out more about where the problems are coming from in these communities in terms of their flooding and drainage concerns. We will know more where the value added needs to be in this particular effort along the coast. In certain communities we'll determine that there is value added along the shoreline and some communities probably not so much.

**Representation Kenton** – I don't think it takes a rock scientist to figure out where the problems are right now. Pretty easy if you get in your car and see the flooding, I don't think we need a 2 year study.

**Jim Eisenhardt will have a Summary of Work at the April 27, 2012 meeting.**

**Andrea Kreiner** – Is there something that the Work Group should be looking at while we wait for the cost share numbers?

**Senator Simpson** – Develop a sub-work group in regards to funding to convene before the cost share numbers.

**Andrea Kreiner and Senator Ennis** stated that it would be more beneficial to wait for the cost share numbers.

**Frank Piorko** will be working on funding avenues to present at the next meeting.

**Representative Peterman** suggested a cut-off date of the studies so that we can move on. He does not us sitting around the table a year or year and a half from now.

**Senator Bushweller** in response to Representative Peterman – Looking at real solutions to these problems that we have and to make sure that we can honestly say to the tax payers that the proposals that we are making to address these problems are good proposal based on good data, and good investigation. And that we can be reasonably sure that we will get the results we want. The only way to do that is to make sure we have the solid understanding of all the facts. Putting an artificial time line on the development of the data does not serve our purposes that well. One of the things that this group should be doing is putting the pressure to keep things moving so that it does not become like some of the other projects with more studies.

## **Public comments**

1. Displeased with the study. The studies do not get anywhere. *Applause from the public participates.*

**Senator Simpson response** – The legislators sitting around the table are only about 15% of the legislation and we have to convince the others to come up with the money. That is

why we have to do the economic study. It takes time to come up with the rational to spend the public dollars.

2. Concern regarding the definition of the “do nothing”: *Do Nothing - Defined*  
*This alternative involves no action on the part of state shoreline managers. No beach fill or beach enhancement will occur, historic shoreline migration will cause increasing damage to structures. Houses will be destroyed or removed. Flood insurance is available, and generally covers damage and removal.*

**Senator Bushweller** will be stepping down as one of the co-chairs due to the fact that he will not have any bay beaches in his districts. He has been convinced by this process that these problems that we have been talking about are serious problems that require serious attention. Therefore, even though he will be stepping down as a co-chair you will have an advocate for this process for the result of this process for the things that the State really should do which will be more fully flushed out and determined as the process goes forward.

**Next meeting – April 27, 2012, Senate Hearing Room, Legislative Hall, Dover.**